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STUDY OF PROTESTS REPORTED IGNORED

Johnson Got C.I.A. Findings on Antiwar Movement in 1967

TOLEDO, Ohio, Aug. 7 (AP) — The Central Intelligence Agency told President Johnson in 1967 that there was no Communist-controlled or foreign-inspired link to the protests against the Vietnam War but he refused to believe it, a historian says.

A 23-page unsigned C.I.A. report, recently declassified from "top-secret — sensitive" status, was obtained from the Johnson Presidential library in Austin, Tex., by Charles DeBenedetti of the University of Toledo.

The report, submitted to Johnson in November 1967 by Richard Helms, then Director of Central Intelligence, stemmed in part from a march on the Pentagon a month earlier, the historian said.

About 100,000 protesters took part in the demonstration to oppose United States involvement in Vietnam.

Mr. DeBenedetti, who specializes in the history of the antiwar movement, said the report was mentioned by Congressional committees investigating intelligence-gathering practices but was never made public before he obtained it last September.

He said in a paper that the intelligence agency's information to Johnson was colored by "the agency's bureaucratic interest in aiding the Administration in its aim of discrediting the antiwar opposition."

Among the conclusions reached in the C.I.A. analysis was that while many antiwar leaders had close Communist associations "they do not appear to be under Communist direction."

"In any case," the analysis said, "their purposes insofar as the war in Vietnam is concerned coincide with the Communists'."

Noting contacts between antiwar leaders and the North Vietnamese Government in Hanoi, the report said that "Moscow exploits and may 'lead influence' peace groups through its front organizations but that indications 'of covert or overt connections between these U.S. activists and foreign governments are limited.'"

The analysts concluded, "On the basis of what we now know, we see no significant evidence that would prove Communist control or direction of the U.S. peace movement or its leaders."

The importance of the analysis, Mr. DeBenedetti said, is that Johnson "ignored it because it did not suit his political purpose, which was to establish foreign control of the antiwar movement."